



AP Photo/Wade Payne

Vols fans rush the field and tear down the goalposts after beating Alabama in Neyland Stadium on Saturday.

ROLLED

Vols end 15 year drought vs. Alabama

By **AL LESAR**
Associated Press

KNOXVILLE — After 15 years of being a rival to Alabama in name only, Tennessee snapped a stumbling losing streak, stumped itself a championship contender and celebrated in spectacular fashion.

Chase McGrath made a 40-yard field goal as time expired to give No. 6 Tennessee a 52-49 victory over No. 3 Alabama on Saturday.

As soon as the kick knuckle-balled through the uprights, some of the more than 100,000 fans stormed the field to join the party as the Volunteers (6-0, 3-0 Southeastern Conference) ended a 15-game drought to the Crimson Tide (6-1, 3-1).

Fireworks went off over Neyland Stadium and it glowed orange as the song "Dixieland Delight" by the band Alabama — a Crimson Tide favorite — blared over the stadium speakers.

And it didn't take long for the goal posts to go down.

"This is college football at its absolute best," Vols coach Josh Heupel said. "We were the best team on the field tonight. That's all we can control."

"We didn't answer the bell today," Alabama

coach Nick Saban said. "We did too many things to help (Tennessee)."

Hendon Hooker drove the Vols 45 yards in 13 seconds to set up the winner. An 18-yard pass to Ramel Keyton and 27-yard hookup with Bru McCoy set the stage for the winner.

"It wasn't my cleanest hit," said McGrath, who missed a PAT earlier. "I didn't have the best contact on the ball."

Jalin Hyatt caught six passes for 207 yards, setting a Tennessee record with five touchdowns and earning a postgame cigar — a long-held tradition in the third Saturday of October rivalry — with former Vols great Peyton Manning.

Bryce Young, a game-time decision because of a sprained right shoulder two weeks ago, completed 35 passes for 455 yards and two TDs for the Tide.

"It was great to be out there with my teammates," the Heisman Trophy winner said. "Shoulder is fine."

Hyatt's fifth TD catch tied it at 49 with 3:26 left in the fourth.

"(This game) just happened," Hyatt said. "It's not just me. It was just the looks we got."

Young drove the Tide into the Tennessee territory in the final

minute, but Alabama stalled at the 33 with three straight incomplete passes. Will Reichard's 50-yard field goal attempt for the lead was wide way right.

With only 15 seconds left, overtime seemed likely, but Hooker wasn't done and did the Heisman winner one better.

Hooker finished 21 for 30 for 385 yards and five TDs.

"He played at an unbelievable level," Heupel said. "He's the key to our ignition."

Tennessee had not beaten a Top 10 team since 2006 against Georgia. That was also the last year the Vols beat Alabama.

A season later, Saban became Alabama's coach. While the Tide has become college football's greatest dynasty with six national titles, Tennessee has burned through coaches and been mired in mediocrity.

In his second season in Knoxville, Heupel has pulled the Vols from the muck.

Tennessee looks like a legitimate national title contender behind a transfer quarterback from Virginia Tech who should now be right near the top of those Heisman leaderboards.

"We approach every

game the same," Hooker said. "Play 100% for our brothers."

A week after Alabama held Texas A&M out of the end zone on the last play of the game to dodge an upset, the Tide went down. The Vols scored the most points against an Alabama team since Sewanee put 54 on the Tide in 1907.

The Tide also had 17 penalties for 130 yards, the most during the Saban era, according to ESPN.

Tennessee's up-tempo offense jumped out to a 21-7 first-quarter lead and led 28-20 at halftime. All four touchdown drives took over

two minutes.

Young threw for 205 yards and a touchdown in the first half, while Hooker had 166 yards and two scores. Young wasn't sacked, but was knocked down five times in the half.

Alabama fumbled Tennessee's only punt. The Vols recovered and scored four plays later.

The takeaway

Alabama: The Tide will lament the final time it had the ball and not being able to just get a few more yards for Reichard, who missed three field goals last week against A&M.

Jahmyr Gibbs dropped a short pass over the middle with room to run on second down and then the Tide threw again incomplete on third. A running play or two could have also forced Tennessee to burn a timeout, which ended up coming in handy when the Vols got the ball back.

Tennessee: Four of Tennessee's six victories have come against teams that were ranked at the time of the game — though none of Pitt, LSU and Florida were ranked coming into this weekend. Still, the Vols resume is as good as any in the country.

SEC slams Tennessee with \$100k fine

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — The Southeastern Conference has fined Tennessee \$100,000 for a wild, field-storming celebration after a win over Alabama.

Meanwhile, the school has turned to fans to help pay for new goalposts.

The league announced the fine on Sunday for the school's second violation of the access to competition area policy. The first came after a basketball game against Florida in 2006.

The third-ranked Volunteers knocked off No. 6 Alabama 52-49 on a last-play field goal Saturday at Neyland Stadium. It ended a 15-game losing streak to the Tide.

Fans stormed the field, ripped up one of the goal posts and heaved it into the Tennessee River.

Tennessee turned to crowdsourc-

ing to pay for replacement goalposts. More than \$18,000 had been raised as of Sunday afternoon.

Athletic director Danny White tweeted "We had some fun, didn't we?" and asked fans to "help us out."

SEC policy states that "access to competition areas shall be limited to participating student-athletes, coaches, officials, support personnel and properly-credentialed individuals at all times. For the safety of participants and spectators alike, at no time before, during or after a contest shall spectators be permitted to enter the competition area. It is the responsibility of each member institution to implement procedures to ensure compliance with this policy."

A third offense and beyond would cost Tennessee \$250,000.

Vols move up to No. 3 in latest poll

By **RALPH D. RUSSO**
AP College Football Writer

Tennessee moved to No. 3 in The Associated Press college football poll behind No. 1 Georgia and No. 2 Ohio State after knocking off Alabama.

The Crimson Tide was one of five unbeaten teams to fall during a wild weekend and dropped three places to No. 6 in the AP Top 25 presented by Regions Bank. Alabama swapped places with the Vols after losing to them 52-49 on a field goal as time expired Saturday.

Georgia remained No. 1 and received 31 first-place votes and Ohio State had 17 first-place votes.

The Vols received 15 first-place votes and have their

best ranking since starting the 2005 season at No. 3. The last time Tennessee was ranked this highly in the second half of the season was 2001, reaching the top 10 in late October and headed into the SEC championship at No. 2.

No. 4 Michigan moved up a spot Sunday, switching places with No. 5 Clemson after the Wolverines blew out now-No. 16 Penn State.

No. 7 Mississippi moved up two spots and No. 8 TCU, No. 9 UCLA and No. 10 Oregon all moved into the top 10.

Poll points
The Crimson Tide had its string of 40 straight appearances in the top five snapped. It was the longest such active streak in the country.

Georgia now has the longest run of top-five appearances with 24.

The Tide's latest top-five run is only the third longest of the Saban era. The Tide's 68 straight top-five appearances from 2015-19 is the AP poll record, and a string of 48 consecutive top-five rankings from 2011-13 is tied for fourth.

Explain your vote

Tennessee made a case to be the No. 1 team in the country, and it swayed some voters.

Those who bought in on the Vols cited a resume that includes four victories against teams that were ranked at the time (at Pitt, Florida, at LSU and Alabama).

"I voted Tennessee No. 1

because the Vols' strength of schedule is far superior to UGA and Ohio State," said Ron Counts of the Idaho Statesman in Boise.

For comparison, Georgia has played just one team (Oregon) that has been ranked at any point this season. Ohio State has played three, though only one was ranked at the time (Notre Dame) and all of those opponents have at least three losses.

Plus, beating Alabama doesn't happen often and holds a lot of weight with voters. No team this season has beaten a team with a better ranking at the time the game was played than Tennessee.

"It was a tough call between Tennessee and Georgia for No. 1," said Kellis Robinett of The Wichita (Kansas) Ea-

gle. "I have been voting the Bulldogs ahead of everyone else for several weeks, mostly because their blowout victory over Oregon has aged like a fine wine. But I think beating Alabama is slightly more impressive."

So why only No. 3 for Tennessee?

The ranked-at-the-time argument falls flat for some voters, who were less impressed with victories against Florida and Pitt and give Georgia and Ohio State credit for being more dominant overall.

"I've been high on Tennessee all year, but I don't think ranking them No. 3 is any kind of snub this week," said Mike Barber of the Richmond (Virginia) Times-Dispatch.